





A LETTER

TO THE

RIGHT REV. PATRICK TORRY, D.D.

BISHOP OF THE UNITED DIOCESE OF ST ANDREWS, &c. &c.

BY THE

REV. CHARLES WORDSWORTH, M.A.

WARDEN OF TRINITY COLLEGE, IN THE SAME DIOCESE.

GRANT; EDINBURGH :

PARKER ; LONDON AND OXFORD.

MDCCCL.

LETTER.

MY LORD,



THE conversation with which your Lordship favoured me on Sunday last, has convinced me that I shall not be doing what you will consider wrong, but rather what, in your candour and condescension, you will approve, if I recall the proceedings of the recent Synod of your Diocese, which have been referred most improperly to the judgment of the readers of English Newspapers, to the tribunal where they ought to be brought, namely, to the hearing of your Lordship ; provided that it be done, as I shall endeavour to do it, without asperity, and with an earnest desire to imitate the simplicity and sincerity of truth which I have seen in you.

Allow me then, I beseech you, to refer these important matters to your Lordship with all deference and respect ; since I am now aware that, notwithstanding your advanced age, by the blessing of God you are still able, and from your high sense of what is right, and just, and true, will not be unwilling, to take cognizance of them.

First, then, I have to complain that a Report of the discussions held at the late meeting of our Synod, has appeared in three, if not more of the English Newspapers, contrary to an unanimous Resolution of the

Synod holden at Kirkcaldy in 1842, which forbad any notice or advertisement respecting our Synodical proceedings to be sent to a Newspaper, except by the Bishop of the Diocese, or the Dean acting under his direction. Further, I have to state that when I first saw that report in one of these Newspapers, I wrote to a brother Presbyter, Mr C., to enquire if he was the author. In his answer, he evaded the question, or rather denied my right to put it. Thereupon, I went and called at his house in person, intending to do what the law of Christ prescribes in such cases, namely, "to tell him his fault between him and me alone." When he admitted at length that the published report had emanated from him, (after correction, as I understood, by another, whom I supposed to be Mr L.) I told him that he had done me wrong, and the Synod wrong, and most of all wrong to himself, in publishing such a report; *first*, because it ought not to have been published at all, and *next*, because it was not honest nor correct;—*not honest*, because it gave a very unfair and *ex parte* view of what had passed, making mention of Mr C., Mr L., Mr F., and Mr H., the only Members who spoke on one side, but omitting all mention even of the names of Mr T., Mr J., Mr W., and Mr B., all of whom spoke most earnestly and forcibly on the other; and still *more dishonest*, because, while it represents Mr Wordsworth as "intimating that proceedings would also be taken against the Bishop of the Diocese himself," it omits to mention how solemnly I deprecated, again and again, the use which was made of the Bishop's name throughout the discussion; and

how what I did say to the effect reported, was eventually extorted from me by the avowal of Mr Lendrum, that, let the Synod resolve what it might, he should still use and recommend the new Prayer-Book, under the authority of his Diocesan, however opposed to the decree of the Episcopal Synod ;—*not correct*, in other respects, and because it represented me as saying that I regarded the Usage of *Reservation of the Elements* of the Holy Eucharist as contrary to the xxxix Articles ; whereas what I said, was, that it was a matter for grave deliberation which I would not presume to decide, but upon which I should be content to receive a *competent decision* of the Church either way, how far the new Rubric which *commands Reservation* was reconcileable to the spirit and wording of the Article (which we have all subscribed) “*non servabatur ex instituto Christi.*” Having explained this to Mr C., I said that I trusted if he considered that he had done me wrong, he would write to the Newspapers and correct the report. I have looked, however, in vain, for such an amends.

Next, I have to complain of Mr L. (supposing what I conjectured from Mr C.’s confession to be the fact, viz. that he was a party to sending the report,) for the same offence.

In both these cases, however, I would gladly believe,

1. That neither of these Gentlemen was aware of the Resolution of the Synod which forbids the publication, in general, of any such Report, as that which they sent to the Newspapers.

2. That each of them *understood me to say*, what I am reported to have said, with respect to *Reservation*, as actually inconsistent with the Article, though I certainly did not say it, and the whole tenor of my argument should have led to a different conclusion. For I declared over and over again, that so far as I knew, I did not object to any of the so-called “Scotch usages.” I expressed my thankfulness that our Diocese was blessed with an orthodox Bishop who, I felt sure, would be little likely to recommend any practice which I might not safely receive. But at the same time I added, that I scrupled altogether at the name, and pretensions and authority of this new Book. I said, moreover, that it appeared to me both ungrateful and offensive to my own Mother Church ;—*ungrateful*, because though it borrowed so largely from her Liturgical Offices, it never so much as makes mention of her Name ;—*offensive*, because it presumes to contradict the letter of her law in the matter of *Reservation*, which might indeed properly and charitably be done by the equal authority of a Synod of the Church, but not by the command of a single Bishop ; that such an example was most perilous at all times, but more especially in the present age and condition of the Church ; because, though we ourselves are happily blessed by a catholic and orthodox Bishop, other Dioceses elsewhere, and this Diocese at a future time, might be cursed by a heterodox or heretical one :—all this, and much more, I stated, which should, I think, have preserved me, with proper attention and truthfulness on the part of the re-

porters, from such a bald and mistaken representation of my true sentiments.

3. It is possible Messrs C. and L. may have sent explanations to the Newspapers, though they have not been inserted. I will hope for their sakes that it has been so.

But these are trifling matters, not worthy to be submitted to your Lordship's notice, except as characteristic of, and tending to throw light upon the whole proceeding. As to the wrong itself, whatever it may be, I can most truly say that I feel much more for the sake of those who have done it, than for myself who suffer it.

Let me therefore pass on to what is more important.

You will remember that I began our conversation by reminding you that, as Warden of Trinity College, THE COLLEGE OF THE CHURCH, I am required by an order of the Bishops—an order in which, I was aware, you had not concurred with your Episcopal Brethren, but otherwise an *unanimous order*—to use in alternate administrations of the Holy Eucharist, the English Office, which Office however, is not to be found in the new Prayer-Book, which professes to contain the “Administration of the Sacraments according to the use of the Church of Scotland.” I further informed you that I was in the habit of reading and explaining the two Offices, together with the Rubrics of the English Office (the Scotch, hitherto, having had no Rubrics,) publicly in the College Chapel, and that now, inasmuch as I ought to consider the recommendation of my Diocesan

equivalent to a command, I was required to put into the hands of my Boys, and Young Men, Students in Theology, *two Rubrics which plainly and directly contradict each other* ; that this was a grievance to me personally, and a most dangerous consequence to all whom your Lordship had concurred, with the other Bishops of the Church, in committing to my charge ; that it was *nothing less in kind, though minor in degree*, than that which the Judicial Committee of Privy Council had been recently guilty of in its judgment against the Bishop of Exeter ; recommending, if not requiring me to teach a *double doctrine* in a matter which respects the administration of a Sacrament of the Church. “ *Every particular* or NATIONAL CHURCH hath,” indeed I admitted, “ authority to ordain, change, and abolish ceremonies or rites,” but *every particular Bishop*, who has bound himself and his Diocese by the acceptance of the Canons of the Church to act in concert with other Bishops and other Dioceses in all things that concern the interests of the whole, (and what more directly concerns the good of the whole, than “The Book of *their* Common Prayer?”) — *a single Bishop* who has so bound himself, cannot, consistently with that bond, take by himself a step involving consequences such as I have described.

To this your Lordship replied that you yourself had no wish to have excluded the English Office from the new Prayer-Book, and that you would not have been displeased had it been inserted ; that had you entertained any such design, you would have acted *very inconsistently*, inasmuch as you had allowed several Congregations in your Diocese to

use that Office, and had lately re-admitted one into the Church upon the express condition, required on their part, that no other Office should be used by them. You further stated that you had no thought or intention of making new Laws for the Church—a thing which, you well knew, it was not competent for you to do—nor of introducing new Rubrics, still less, of contradicting those which at present exist, but merely of recording your own experience and recollection of the Usages of the Church during the last Century; and that even this you would never have thought of doing except in compliance with a request of certain of your Presbyters, whose requisition to that effect you put into my hands. This was the substance of your Lordship's reply, and I could not but admire the clearness, perspicacity, and love of truth which you evinced both in apprehending the views which I endeavoured to convey to you, and in communicating to me your own.

But, my Lord, will you allow me to say, and endeavour to point out to you, as shortly as I can, that these things, none of which you yourself had any *wish*, or *intention*, or *thought* to do, have all nevertheless been REALLY DONE—done by others, under the veil of your authority, and in your name.

For see, I beseech you, how the case stands.

1. Your Lordship did not wish to *exclude the English Office*, or to deny that that Office is according to the use of the Church in this Country. Yet this is virtually denied by the Book which others have put together under your name; because, purporting to be “The Book of Common Prayer and

Administration of the Sacraments according to the use of the Church of Scotland," it does not contain that Office.

2. Your Lordship did not intend to be *inconsistent*, and to revoke the admission to all the privileges of Communion in the Church which you granted, for instance, last year to Mr Wood's Congregation in *Perth*; which you granted many years before (in 1824) to your son's Congregation at *Cupar-Angus*, and it may be, to others; but this revocation has been virtually made by others in your name.

3. Your Lordship did not mean to act *uncharitably* towards the very large portion, I might perhaps say, *the majority* of your Flock, who use the English Office; to raise scruples in their minds, or to question the validity of their Communion in the Scottish Church; you did not mean to say that what the *Dean of the Diocese* uses at *Cupar-Angus*, what the *Senior Presbyter of the Diocese* uses at *St Andrews*, what the *Synod Clerk* of the Diocese uses at *Cupar-Fife*, &c. &c., is not according to the use of the Church in Scotland, and of your own Diocese in particular, and yet, all this, I cannot but think, has been in effect said and done, all this offence has been really given by others in your name.

4. Your Lordship had no wish to act *disrespectfully or uncanonically* towards your Episcopal Colleagues, by pronouncing upon their use without consulting them, or by interfering with their proper rights and authority in their respective Dioceses; but, excuse me if I say these things also have been done by others in your name, when they pronounced

and published to the world that such and such is the use, not of your own Diocese only, but of the whole "Church of Scotland," when such is *not* the use of the other Bishops of the Church in this Country. Your Lordship could not intend to condemn all your Brethren, only *one* of whom administers Confirmation as the Order in this new Book *commands* it to be administered, and that *one*—I mean the Bishop of Brechin—does not administer the Eucharist according to the only use, which this Book contains, and whereby alone it *orders* the Sacrament to be administered. You had no intention to condemn—might I not say, to *excommunicate* the Primus of the Church, who, besides not following these newly printed uses in all respects, has had other uses of his own which are not exhibited in this Book. You did not mean to *unchurch* Bishop Forbes, who, preferring, as he does, the so-called Scottish Office, yet has bound himself never to attempt to introduce it in his own Church, at Dundee. You may think perhaps that he, and that others of your Brethren have acted wrong, but you do not deny to them the right of judging what is best and necessary for them to do, each in his own peculiar circumstances. You did not mean to do this indirectly, still less to *speak it openly, as Mr Lendrum has done*. Not content to represent the English Clergy, in general, who minister in this Country, as *Traitors to the Church* which they profess to serve, when he knows that the whole matter in dispute does not depend so much upon the Clergy themselves as upon the Congregations who elect them, and who take care to choose

the man whose opinions and practices will be agreeable to their own—not content with this sweeping misrepresentation of his English Brethren, he adds to it another which affects the Scotch ; he represents that the treachery of the former is strengthened and abetted by a few of the “indigenous Priests,” when he knows that three at least of our indigenous Bishops fall equally under the same charge. Your Lordship did not mean to say this, but what Mr Lendrum has said openly in the Newspapers, has been virtually said by him and others in your name, through the share which they have had in this new Book.

5. Your Lordship had no intention to act *uncanonically in other ways*, by taking upon yourself to legislate for the whole Church ; but to issue Rubrics purporting to be according to the use of the Church, which have not been submitted to your Brethren, or sanctioned by a General Synod—Rubrics which not only testify practices, but plainly and directly *ordain laws*—is not this to legislate for the Church ? and have not others done this in your name ?

6. Your Lordship had no intention to *break the peace and unity of the Church*, nor any thought of acting with *disrespect towards the Church of England* ; but to suppress one of her Rubrics in order to introduce its contradictory, is not this the way to “murder peace,” and to bring into imminent jeopardy the continuance of our Communion with the Sister Church ? When I quoted to you the words in the English Rubric respecting the remaining Elements of the Holy Eucharist,—“shall not be carried out of the Church,” you seemed to have forgotten them ; but

they could scarcely have been forgotten by others, who must have had that Rubric before them, when they were preparing to reconstruct the Book of Common Prayer to be edited under the sanction of your authority and in your name.

7. Nothing, I am sure, could have been further from *your* thought than to *expose me to the imputation of thwarting the progress of the Church, and of disappointing the hopes that had been entertained of me*, (for with characteristic kindness and condescension you assured me of your “fraternal regard,”) but this also has been the result of what others have done, acting, as they profess, in your behalf; this grave accusation has been publicly brought against me by one who is supposed to be in your fullest confidence; and who has undertaken, as he avows in this matter, your defence. Agreeing, as I do with your Lordship, as to the superior excellence of the Scottish Office, and that every Englishman ought to be thankful who enjoys in this Country the privilege of using it, and feeling also with you that its cause is not likely to be promoted by a contemptuous and intolerant disallowal of the English form, you, I am sure, will not think that the present troubles and difficulties of the Church are to be laid *at my door*, whose “recent conduct” has been guided by the same principles which I have acted on from the beginning; and which, in fact, are none other than those which appear to be marked out for me by the very nature and constitution of the Office I have been called to fill, as *Guardian of the College*, established to defend and promote the cause, and to teach and

represent the *Use*, both in doctrine and discipline, of the *Church in Scotland*.

8. But least of all, I am persuaded, was it your wish or thought to speak *untruly*. And yet when you speak—or appear to speak—of this new Book as “in strict conformity with the usage”—or “according to the use of the Church of Scotland,”—what am I to say? USE, OR USAGE, CAN BE ONLY PREDICATED EITHER OF PRESENT, ACTUAL, OR OF AUTHORITATIVE USE. Of our *present, actual* use, there can be no question. Both by *omission and insertion*, this Book is at variance with the use of the great Majority. Is it then according to the *authoritative* use? Take the most important matter of all—the Sacrament by which we Communicate with the Church. The 21st Canon of the Church distinctly authorizes both Offices; whereas this Book contains only one. That Canon, as itself speaks, *designed* “to promote an union among all those who profess to be of the Episcopal persuasion in Scotland.” The *design* of this Book would appear to be to dissolve that union. And this *apparent*, and must I not say *presumptuous* uncharitableness is the more aggravated, because, since the passing of the Canon, the number of Congregations who have been allowed and authorized by the Bishops, your Lordship among the number, to use the English form, has been increased *sevenfold*. Take again the rite of Confirmation. This Book directs that it shall be performed so and so. By what authority? By your own, it will be said. Our Canons are silent upon the point. And in such a case each Diocesan may order the use which he thinks best. Yes,

for his own Diocese, but not for “the Church of Scotland.” And such a use, unless it be actually used elsewhere—and in the present case *your* use is followed only in one other Diocese—cannot be truly spoken of, still less can it be charitably, or prudently, or lawfully *ordered*, as the *use of the whole Church*. But, it may be alleged, your Lordship can remember the time when all the Bishops *Confirmed* by the same; they knew of no other use. Be it so; but now their Successors have left it off. It is not for me to say whether they have done wisely. To their own Master they stand or fall. But in doing what they have done, they have used no other authority than that which is claimed for you; and their use *within their own Dioceses* has become authoritative. In this matter therefore, which relates to the Order of Confirmation, untruth is added to presumption, no less than in the other, which concerns the Form of Administration of the Lord’s Supper.

It would be easy for me to add more; but I must not forget that I am writing to “such an one as Paul the aged.” One thing only I will add. Not long ago it was my painful duty, on an occasion too well known, to maintain what I conceived to be the just authority of my Diocesan against a Member of a Congregation, which at the time declined, notwithstanding your most earnest appeal, to recognise and admit your Episcopal superintendence;—and I received your thanks for so doing. In the present instance I have likewise been engaged—and a still more painful duty it has been to me—in defending, according to the best of my judgment, your just

authority, in behalf not only of that same Congregation, which you have since received under your Pastoral care, but of two-thirds of the Congregations of the whole Church—in defending, I say, your legitimate authority, against those who, by stretching it beyond its measure, have brought it into danger, dishonour, and rebuke. Shall I not also now receive your thanks for so doing?

And now, my Lord, I conclude. Deeply, most deeply do I regret that it has devolved upon me to trouble the extremity of your old age with a letter of this description. But what else could I do? How otherwise could I acquit myself of the two-fold obligation under which I lie, as the Guardian of the College of the Church, and as an Instituted Minister of your Lordship's Diocese? *Act* I must in both these capacities; there was no escape; and if I have appeared to act against my Diocesan—which has been unsparingly cast in my teeth—I must be able to shew good cause for what I have done. If this cause has not been shewn, let me surrender both offices at once. But if it has, you, at least, I am persuaded, will acquit me of any other motive than that of doing my duty to the Church, and to you, and to *Him*, Whose authority you bear, and *Whose* Representative you are.

I am, MY LORD, with the utmost respect,

Your dutiful Presbyter, and

Faithful Servant in Christ,

CHARLES WORDSWORTH.

CANONS VIOLATED BY THE NEW PRAYER-BOOK.

RULES FOR THE ORDER AND DISCIPLINE OF THE CHURCH SHALL BE MADE AND ENACTED BY A GENERAL SYNOD ONLY: AND NO LAW . . . SHALL BE ENACTED, ABROGATED, OR ALTERED, BUT BY THE CONSENT, AND WITH THE APPROBATION OF THE MAJORITY OF BOTH CHAMBERS.—Canon xxxii.

IT IS HEREBY DECREED THAT THE CLERGY OF ONE DIOCESE MUST NOT INTERFERE IN THE AFFAIRS OF ANOTHER.

THEY SHALL RETAIN THE RIGHT OF APPEALING FROM ANY SENTENCE OF THEIR OWN BISHOP, BY WHICH THEY MAY THINK THEMSELVES AGGRIEVED, TO THE PRIMUS AND OTHER COM-PROVINCIAL BISHOPS IN SYNOD CANONICALLY ASSEMBLED.—Canon xxxvii.

IN ALL THE ORDINARY PARTS OF DIVINE SERVICE, IT IS NECESSARY TO FIX, BY AUTHORITY, THE PRECISE FORM, FROM WHICH NO BISHOP, PRESBYTER, OR DEACON, SHALL BE AT LIBERTY TO DEPART, BY HIS OWN ALTERATIONS OR INSERTIONS, LEST SUCH LIBERTY SHOULD PRODUCE CONSEQUENCES DESTRUCTIVE OF DECENCY AND ORDER. IT IS HEREBY ENACTED THAT, IN THE PERFORMANCE OF MORNING AND EVENING SERVICE, THE WORDS AND RUBRICAL DIRECTIONS OF THE ENGLISH LITURGY SHALL BE STRICTLY ADHERED TO.—Canon xxviii.

AS, IN ORDER TO PROMOTE AN UNION AMONG ALL THOSE WHO PROFESS TO BE OF THE EPISCOPAL PERSUASION IN SCOTLAND, PERMISSION WAS FORMERLY GRANTED BY THE BISHOPS TO RETAIN THE USE OF THE ENGLISH OFFICE IN ALL CONGREGATIONS WHERE THE SAID OFFICE HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY IN USE, THE SAME PERMISSION IS NOW RATIFIED AND CONFIRMED.

AND IT IS ALSO ENACTED THAT, IN THE USE OF EITHER THE SCOTCH OR ENGLISH OFFICE, NO AMALGAMATION, ALTERATION,

OR INTERPOLATION WHATEVER SHALL TAKE PLACE ; NOR SHALL ANY SUBSTITUTION OF THE ONE FOR THE OTHER BE ADMITTED, UNLESS IT BE APPROVED BY THE BISHOP.—Canon xxi.

EVERY CLERGYMAN SHALL PAY ATTENTION TO THE SPIRIT AND DESIGN OF THE RUBRICS PREFIXED TO THE ORDER FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER, IN THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.—Canon xx.

The above Extracts are from “ the Code of Canons of the Episcopal Church in Scotland, as revised, amended, and enacted, by an Ecclesiastical Synod holden at Edinburgh in the year of our Lord 1838.”

